

**Hampton Beach Area Commission  
Meeting Minutes – May 25, 2006  
Hampton Police Station Conference Room**

**In Attendance:**

Fred Rice, Chairman – Town of Hampton  
Doug DePorter – Vice Chairman, NH Dept. of Transportation  
John Kane – Hampton Beach Village District  
Skip Windemiller – Hampton Beach Village District  
Warren Bambury – Rockingham Regional Planning Commission  
Tom Higgins – Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce  
Brian Warburton – DRED (Seacoast Parks and Recreation)  
Jamie Steffen – Town Planner, Town of Hampton (Administrative)  
Judy Santarelli – Seacoast Parks and Recreation (Administrative)

**Excused:**

Allison McLean - DRED  
Jim Workman – Selectman, Town of Hampton

**Absent:**

Sandrine Thibault – Office of Energy and Planning

Chairman Fred Rice opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Chairman Rice introduced the members present and an invited guest, Carol Barleon of the Scenic By-Ways Program.

Minutes from the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed. The following corrections were made: Tom Higgins was listed as being excused from attendance while the spelling of Allison McLean's name was corrected on pg. 7 of the minutes.

**Old Business**

Chairman Rice explained that Jim Workman, Brian Warburton, John Kane and Doug DePorter had attended the meeting of the Hampton Selectmen on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Each provided an update for the Selectmen of the activities of the committees and issues with which they are involved. Chairman Rice felt the session was positive and resulted in valuable sharing of information.

## **Committee Reports**

**Community Development:** Skip Windemiller reported that progress is being made on the design guideline booklet that is being developed to provide a reference for development and building projects. The subcommittee held a recent meeting on the design booklet, and plans on having one more meeting before summer. Mr. Windemiller raised discussion of the form used when demolition jobs take place. It was mentioned that Kevin Shultz would have information on this.

Chairman Rice gave credit to the architects, Rich Correll and Shannon Alter, explaining that they are volunteering their expertise and doing a great job. The group may need until fall to produce something that can be shared, but Chairman Rice emphasized that they are coming up with some good suggestions.

**Beachscape:** John Kane said that the beachscape group has made 15 window boxes. Prototypes will be displayed behind the fire station for use in instructing the public. The group is figuring out the logistics for watering, and fertilizing the boxes. They are scheduled to meet on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The group plans to provide plant materials and fertilizer and is asking the public to bring what they can for containers. In this way the group feels they will be able to get a lot more color for the money.

John Kane asked who is putting in the grates along Ashworth Ave. The installation of trees was discussed.

Mr. Kane is trying to get sand cleaned up along Ocean Blvd. He mentioned that there was a mound of sand in front of the Puritan, and also in front of his house. Tom Higgins pointed out that all of the equipment which is being used on the many different projects going on at the beach gets in the way of the clean up. John Kane said that he has attempted to contact many people in order to take care of this. The State Park side is clean but the town side is not. There will need to be cooperation. Fred Rice said he would call the Town Manager and encourage that it be cleaned up.

A discussion of signage followed. Chairman Rice mentioned that some towns have street signs with large, very clear lettering, and suggested similar signage for streets in Hampton. John Kane said that street signs in Rhode Island are very clear, very wide, and very high.

Chairman Rice said that he had spoken to Fred Schaake to confirm whether he would be willing to install the TV camera and lights currently on the Sea Shell tower on the roof of the Casino so that the tower could be taken down, and that Mr. Schaake agreed. Skip Windemiller said that he does not feel that the tower blocks any view and that he does not think it is necessary to worry about now. He suggested that the group move on. Chairman Rice feels that it is an eyesore and blocks view.

**Zoning & Redevelopment:** Discussion of FAR Ratios and first floor retail zoning regs was postponed due to Mr Workman's absence. Jamie Steffen had planned to talk with

Glenn Greenwood today regarding the update of Hampton Zoning Regulations, but he had to postpone. They will meet on June 1<sup>st</sup> to go over what they're considering in terms of the FAR ratio.

Chairman Rice asked if Glenn Greenwood will be doing the computerized rendition of the FAR ratios. Mr. Steffen indicated that he was and that it will be interesting to see what he comes up with.

**Transportation and Parking:** Doug DePorter acknowledged that his work has been set back due to flooding. He explained that there had not been the chance to talk about rehabilitation of bridge as had been planned. The bridge section was postponed in order to discuss status of all after flooding.

Jamie Steffen said he had spoken with a few firms for parking analysis. They were in agreement that the first step would be to do a parking analysis. Mr. Steffen tried to give them background. Their suggestion was to do a comprehensive parking analysis – looking at all of the parking in the beach area. Mr. Steffen tried to get a ballpark figure for the cost of such an analysis. The fees seem to range from \$10,000-15,000. Chairman Rice suggested that some of the funding might be obtained from the Rockingham Economic Development Commission. He went on to say it might be possible to get into this year's funds. Chairman Rice repeated the need to look at the whole picture for a solution not just a structure. He added there are probably a half a dozen solutions that would be possible. He also said that he had recently seen Representative Martha Fuller Clark who had expressed support for improvements to the Hampton River Bridge.

John Kane showed the cover of "Tidings," a publication of The Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce, which offered a sketch of the bridge.

**State Park Activity Report:** Brian Warburton discussed Senate Bill 5, which includes a request for \$10 million in upgrades at Hamton Beach, to include replacing the Seashell complex. He said SB5 is very important since it establishes into law the need to reassess the state park system. He said that New Hampshire is the only state in the country where revenues from the park system provide the only source of funding for the parks. A final report is supposed to be issued on Nov. 30. He pointed out the current economic strain and stressed that the Seashell complex needs to become more of a year round focus. He emphasized the need for everyone's input. Chairman Rice explained that Senate Bill 5 can be viewed by going to the town of Hampton website.

Brian Warburton said that the rumors that the Parks Division is building a parking structure are not true. He acknowledged that this would be the last meeting of the Commission until after the summer season and congratulated all of the groups for their work. He said that Faye, Spofford & Thorndike have been tremendous to work with. Mr. Warburton explained that people who work for the state do not get the credit they deserve. He sighted, for example, the efforts of the people protecting the endangered species. Mr. Warburton told the group sand would be moved to the Sun Valley area next

Tuesday. He pointed out that the entire outside of the Sea Shell and most of the inside has been newly painted. He said beach raking is in progress and that he feels it looks great. His philosophy is that we have to talk year round – He reminded the group that the rail replacement project will begin on the Monday after the Seafood Festival with much thicker rail than was used before.

Mr. Warburton emphasized the community stating that people who visit Hampton want to see a nice place and he encouraged efforts to work together. He pointed out that lighting at the beach is better and emphasized the need to get things done and to look ahead to new projects and project plans. He reminded the group that there will be entertainment at the Sea Shell every Saturday and Sunday night. He also said that banners and information boards will be put up. There will be a telephone information service at 1-877-nhparks in both English and Spanish where people will get information on water temperature and conditions every day at 9 am. He mentioned two major events of the summer being the Sand Castle competition and Seafood Festival. Other events include a Ski Jump event, and Labor Day activities. All events are family oriented. Mr. Warburton anticipates a great Memorial Day weekend. He said that cars are everywhere and phones are ringing. The parks are booked up and reserved for special functions and school groups. He emphasized the need for working together as a team. He asked for the involvement and input of local residents. He gave his cell phone number as 491-4548 if anyone needs to reach him.

Tom Higgins spoke about the parking spaces along Ocean Blvd next to the entrance to Church Street, saying that it is a hazard to driving since it limits vision, and that only compact cars fit well. Skip Windemiller acknowledged the same is true in other areas as well. Chairman Rice agreed that's a significant safety measure.

Brian Warburton addressed the problem created by trash blowing across the streets. Chairman Rice feels that the precinct needs to voice on this and enforce it. John Kane said that most people on his street use barrels. There followed a discussion about the wait for recycle pick up.

Brian Warburton described the Park Division's efforts to beautify the area across from the Ashworth for Memorial Day Weekend.

There followed a discussion about two Hampton residents named Brown who had been killed in Vietnam. Chairman Rice said that it is common to name streets, parks, etc in honor of those killed in action, and wondered if it would be appropriate to name something like the Sea Shell Complex as The Mark Brown Plaza at the Sea Shell. Brian Warburton said he thought there was already a plan to name a school playground in Mark Brown's honor. He went on to commend reporter Patrick Cronin for his excellent coverage of local news in the Hampton Union.

Tom Higgins asked who would be taking care of the island at the end of Ocean Boulevard. Brian Warburton responded that the Park Division had mowed it last year but

thought it might now be under the Port Authority. Tom Higgins expressed that the construction materials stored there are an eyesore.

Brian Warburton pointed out that fees associated with the State Parks are staying the same in order to encourage people to come.

Earth, Sea and Space Center: Fred Rice said he had spoken with Crystal Kent who reaffirmed her commitment to the State Park Area. He said that the Land and Water Conservation Fund may be an obstacle to overcome. He spoke of the challenges involved in doing anything new with the land and that it can't be a totally private thing. Crystal Kent had voiced concerns that other groups (Odiorne and UNH) might move ahead of Earth Sea and Space Center and steal away from it. A feasibility study is being done. Ms. Kent wants to make sure that as many people as possible are aware of this.

Brian Warburton said that UNH wants to move some of their work over to Odiorne. It's not a swap. The Seacoast Science Ctr. has summer concerts from which they derive revenue.

Warren Bambury introduced Carol Barleon as he provided some background to the Commission saying that the Route 1A-1B study that was done previously had ended up becoming part of the Scenic by-Ways program. Hampton had many projects at that time – A couple of times programs were approved but then someone would back off. He said that the town has not gone to Carol's group for years. He acknowledged the Commission's interest in rekindling that relationship.

Carol Barleon of the State Office of Energy and Planning Scenic By-Ways Program said that there is an annual grant application process, an on-line application, that might work for some of the Commission's projects. She said her group has done striping and signage for various communities and that a signage plan or a directional plan is possible. She said she could forward onto the Commission an example of a signage plan that could be used as a model. NH gets more than a million dollars annually. The grants are 80/20. The federal money provides 80%. According to Ms. Barleon, smaller projects are more easily funded. Federal money will not fund projects that are felt to be the responsibility of DOT. She emphasized the need to work carefully with Doug DePorter's group around this. She went on to speak about a pedestrian suspension bridge at Hart's location which is a historic trail over the Saco River. She pointed out that L.W.C.F. money can be used for the fishing pier, but that the project has already been funded by Senator Gregg's work.

Chairman Rice asked what other kinds of projects might qualify? Ms. Barleon responded that banners would be considered signage. No landscaping would be considered eligible for the money.

Chairman Rice asked if signage with lighthouses would qualify and Ms. Barleon responded, “yes,” saying that part of the money could be used for a study and the rest for the signage itself. Skip Windemiller said he liked the signage idea.

Chairman Rice went on to speak of the important significance of Boar’s Head. Mr. Windemiller voiced the idea of having historic signs. Chairman Rice asked about the process to be followed.

Ms. Barleon said that the initial step is to go onto [www.bywaysonline.org](http://www.bywaysonline.org) where the group could see what projects others have done. She said she would be happy to work with the Commission throughout the process. She suggested that she could put the group in touch with a person who did signage for a couple of significant projects. In that way, she said questions about size of signage, how they’re distributed could be answered. She said she would be happy to invite that man to speak to the group. It was voiced that Town Public Works could perhaps put up the signs. Chairman Rice repeated the possibility of the goal being large signs with a logo and that Public Works could be a match.

Ms. Barleon told the group she is located in Concord. The Commission discussed its plans and concurred that Warren Bambury would remain the contact person for the Commission and that Brian Warburton and John Kane would be try to speak further with Ms. Barleon.

Brian Warburton said that the memorial benches are ready to be put out. He also thanked the DES for their donation of 30 cigarette depositories which will be placed at strategic points within the Parks. Mr. Warburton explained that 4 feet of sand was taken from Rocky Bend all along the wall to reveal the stairs. He said that 3 bulldozers were used this year and he was pleased with the results.

Chairman Rice spoke again about project funding stressing that what is needed is some kind of funding for doing studies so that these various projects can be looked at intelligently. He expressed the need to look at public and private sources, the need to get some ideas and formulate them – to get out and talk to people and see what can be brought back. He emphasized the need to make this a priority.

In regards to the reappointment of members, Tom Higgins introduced Chuck Rage, a local businessman, who would be taking his place on the Commission as the Chamber of Commerce representative. Chairman Rice asked if all of the other members had requested reappointment, and reminded them that the current terms expire in June. He continued by saying this Commission marks the first time state and town agencies had combined their efforts to plan and work towards goals. He expressed his appreciation to the group and it was agreed that the next meeting of the Commission would be on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Jamie Steffen and Warren Bambury spoke briefly about their visit to Old Orchard Beach to the Grand Hotel. They found this Condominium/Hotel very impressive. There were 16 commercial spaces in that property.

Skip Windemiller acknowledged that this kind of housing is done to provide higher quality hotel rooms but in Hampton, they end up being used in the winter by families as a way to provide an opportunity to sign children up for school. Laconia got around it by declaring that it is for seasonal living – not for year round. Chairman Rice expressed the need for attracting people with earning power because of the need for an economic engine.

Warren Bambury said they met with both the Town Manager of Old Orchard Beach and the Planner and Developer of the project, who expressed their willingness to come to Hampton to meet with our Town Manager, Planner, etc and that they would be willing to meet with the Commission as well.

Chairman Rice said that the goal for next year should be to have a hard version of everything. He then reminded the group of the legislation that Representative Moore intends to file relating to funding of the bridge project.

Chuck Rage voiced again the serious problem with transportation in Hampton and the difficulty it poses for people trying to get from place to another.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mike Scanlon asked if this police building, or the fire station or town hall, had ever been dedicated to anyone. Chairman Rice replied that they had not.

Copies of the publication, “Ventures”, were distributed by Patrick Cronin of the Hampton Union.

The meeting adjourned shortly before 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Santarelli  
Seacoast Division of Parks Office